

Foster Care Review

Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families

Policy: 700.0030

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The Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) establishes a permanency goal for each child in out of home placement and monitors permanency planning through ongoing strength based assessments of the family and regularly scheduled Foster Care Reviews in compliance with the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act (PL 96-272), the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) (PL 105-98) and Rhode Island General Law (RIGL) 42-72-10. DCYF's Foster Care Review system independently evaluates the safety, well-being and progress toward permanency for each child in out of home placement no less frequently than in six-month intervals until permanency is achieved.

DCYF's Administrative Review Unit (ARU) is responsible to oversee and facilitate each Foster Care Review in collaboration with Family Service Units (FSU), Juvenile Probation and in partnership with families, stakeholders and community providers. The Foster Care Review is a structured, time-limited discussion of family status facilitated by an Administrative Review Officer (ARO) held in the DCYF regional office convenient for the family.

In compliance with Federal law, State Law and Department Policy, the Foster Care Review process monitors that:

- A Service Plan is developed and projects the likely date by which the child may be returned to his or her home safely or placed in an alternative permanent placement.
- Reasonable efforts to prevent placement are made to keep families together through service assistance (refer to [Policy: 700.0005 Preventive Services and Policy: 500.0075 Removal of Child from Home](#)).
- Child safety and well-being are priorities when making decisions around services, placement and permanency planning.
- Permanency planning efforts are initiated at the time of placement, are appropriate per the needs of the child and family and steps to achieve the permanency goal are documented in the Service Plan.
- Placement is safe, effective, least restrictive and meets the child's needs.
- Expanded services for families are provided to make it possible for a child to return home.
- Permanency is achieved for a child within 18 months of removal from the home.
- Reasonable efforts to reunify families are made except under specified circumstances as outlined in ASFA.
- The timely adoption, or other appropriate permanency option, of children who cannot return safely to their own homes occurs.

In addition to the above mandates, the ARO gathers information during each Foster Care Review to:

- Determine the continued need and appropriateness of placement for the child.
- Determine if the services and assistance in placement meet the needs of the child and family and if such services assist the family in achieving sustained progress toward the permanency goal.
- Determine the extent of compliance by parent/guardian with the current Service Plan.
- Identify barriers to permanency for children in placement.
- Track the reason for change in child placement over the last six months.

- Monitor quality of services and measure performance outcomes that mirror the federal Child and Family Service Review (CFSR) process

Related Procedure

[Foster Care Review](#)

Related Policies

[Complaints and Hearings](#)

[Confidentiality](#)

[Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children](#)

[Preventive Services](#)

[Removal of Child from Home](#)

[Rhode Island Children's Information System \(RICHIST\)](#)

[Service Plan](#)

[Termination of Parental Rights](#)

Foster Care Review

Procedure From Policy 700.0030: Foster Care Review

- A. Each child in out of home placement has a Foster Care Review held no less frequently than every six (6) months until permanency is achieved.
 - 1. Each Foster Care Review is based on a system of determinations and factors that address ASFA mandates relating to safety, well-being and permanency.
 - 2. Youth sentenced to the Rhode Island Training School who are on Temporary Community Placement (TCP) have Foster Care Reviews.
 - 3. Once a termination of parental rights has been filed by the Department with the Family Court, reunification efforts are no longer discussed during Foster Care Reviews. Parental participation and discussion during the Foster Care Review is limited to visitation and any concerns that parents may have regarding the care of their children in placement (refer to Policy: 1100.0020, Termination of Parental Rights).
 - 4. States placing children through the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) under courtesy supervision in Rhode Island are responsible for developing service plans with the families and monitoring permanency goals (refer to Policy: 700.0060, Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children).
 - 5. Information gathered during Foster Care Reviews is entered into RICHIST and analyzed to monitor the quality of services, performance outcomes and guide practice.

- B. In partnership with the Department's efforts to monitor permanency planning, participants involved with the child and family are invited to the Foster Care Review to provide valuable input into the review process. Individuals invited include but are not limited to:
 - 1. Primary service worker/supervisor
 - 2. Secondary service worker/supervisor
 - 3. Parents/guardians
 - 4. Child (if age appropriate). This capacity will vary among children; however, most school-aged children can be expected to participate to some extent if they are verbal and understand most of the events occurring in their lives.
 - 5. Service providers
 - 6. Foster parents
 - 7. Placement provider
 - 8. Educational Advocate
 - 9. Other professionals and/or advocates seen as having a significant contribution to the well-being of the family

- C. Scheduling a Foster Care Review
 - 1. Approximately six (6) weeks in advance of a required Foster Care Review, primary service worker and supervisor receive a RICHIST generated e-mail requesting contact be made with ARU to schedule a review for an identified child (refer to RICHIST Window Help: The Meeting Window).
 - 2. Primary service worker or supervisor contacts ARU as soon as possible to schedule a Foster Care Review to ensure invitations are sent out to the participants in a timely manner. Information discussed includes:
 - a. Primary language of the family
 - b. Individuals not appropriate to invite to the review

- c. When children from the same family require separate Foster Care Reviews
 3. In the event contact does not occur between ARU and primary service worker, ARU schedules a Foster Care Review on primary service worker's office day.
 4. ARU sends DCYF # 128, Notification of Foster Care Review, to the following participants:
 - a. Parent/guardian
 - b. Foster parent
 - c. Relative caretaker
 - d. Children if age 16 and older
 5. ARU sends DCYF # 128B, Foster parent Information for Service Plan Review, to all foster parents in addition to DCYF # 128. This form gives foster parents who cannot attend the Foster Care Review the opportunity to provide information to the ARO regarding the child's well-being.
 6. Primary service worker or supervisor sends the DCYF # 128 to all other appropriate participants.
- D. Cancellation of a Foster Care Review
1. Primary service worker or supervisor contacts ARU as soon as possible when a cancellation of a review is initiated by primary service worker along with the reason for the cancellation.
 2. ARU contacts primary service worker or supervisor as soon as possible when a cancellation of the review is initiated by ARU along with the reason for the cancellation.
 3. A new date and time for the rescheduled Foster Care Review is established within thirty (30) days of all cancellations (refer to [RICHIST Window Help: The Meeting Window](#)).
 4. Primary service worker or supervisor notifies all parties in all cases when a review is cancelled.
 5. ARU sends DCYF # 128 with the new date to appropriate participants (refer to C, 4, a-d).
 6. Primary service worker or supervisor sends DCYF # 128 to all other appropriate participants with the new date.
 7. If a Foster Care Review is scheduled and the following changes occur prior to the review, primary case worker notifies ARU scheduler and the meeting is cancelled:
 - a. Child returns to a parent's home
 - b. Child is sentenced to the RITS
 - c. Child's adoption is finalized in Court
 - d. Family's involvement with DCYF is terminated
- E. Responsibilities of Primary Service Worker and/or Supervisor prior to the Foster Care Review
1. Complete or update the Service Plan with families and obtain appropriate signatures (refer to [Policy: 700.0025, Service Plan](#)).
 2. Update family information in RICHIST (refer to [Policy: 700.0100, Rhode Island Children's Information System \[RICHIST\]](#)).
 3. Invite appropriate participants.
 4. Provide copies of reports deemed pertinent to the Foster Care Review that are not contained in RICHIST to the assigned ARO.

5. When a family is transferred to another unit or division, the previous primary service worker and/or supervisor is responsible to attend the Foster Care Review for a period of up to 10 days after the transfer occurs.
- F. Responsibilities of ARO prior to and during the Foster Care Review
1. Review family information contained in RICHIST, including reports/evaluations provided in hard copy form by primary service worker prior to the Foster Care Review.
 2. Facilitate the Foster Care Review.
 - a. Discuss the Service Plan and determine the appropriateness and effectiveness of the plan toward ensuring safety of the child, well being of the child and family and permanency planning.
 - b. Ensure that a permanency plan is in effect for each child.
 - c. Identify challenges to the successful fulfillment of the Service Plan and assist in the planning to overcome identified challenges.
 - e. Assess progress towards meeting goals, objectives and tasks in the Service Plan.
 - f. Ensure for children in state-supervised placements who are 16 years of age or older that a portion of their Service Plan describes services that will prepare the child for independent living.
 - g. Discuss comments and recommendations with case participants.
- G. Outcome of the Foster Care Review
1. Once there has been a thorough review of all material related to the Foster Care Review, ARO completes the RICHIST generated DCYF #128A (refer to [RICHIST Window Help: ARU Review Window \[New\]](#)). DCYF #128A includes the following information:
 - a. Determinations relating to ASFA and Child and Family Service Review (CFSR) issues.
 - b. Factors addressing safety and risk issues in the family.
 - c. Summary and comments relating to case issues and progress.
 - d. Recommendations when necessary to:
 - i. Modify the current Service Plan.
 - ii. Eliminate challenges towards successful fulfillment of the current Service Plan.
 - iii. Modify the goal, objectives and/or tasks for a subsequent Service Plan.
 2. ARO prints two copies of the signature page of DCYF #128A, signs and dates both copies and distributes to primary service worker and or supervisor for signature of agreement.
 - a. If there is agreement, primary service worker and or supervisor sign both copies; place one in the family record and send one to ARU.
 - b. If there is disagreement with any information or recommendations included on the form, the issue is addressed through the mutual chain of command of ARO and the primary service worker until a resolution is reached.
 - c. Parent/guardian and children (when appropriate) enter signatures in the participation section of the signature page.
 - d. If the parent disagrees with the recommended changes and/or modifications to the Service Plan, ARO or the primary service worker

informs the parent of the right to appeal (refer to [Policy: 100.0055, Complaints and Hearings](#)).

3. If requested, a signed copy of the recommendations/signature page is forwarded by the primary service worker and/or supervisor to the contract providers and other individual participants in compliance with [DCYF Policy 100.000, Confidentiality](#).
4. ARO may determine that an issue is serious enough to warrant the creation of a Red Flag (refer to [RICHIST Window Help: Red Flag Factors Window](#)). If a red flag warning is needed, the ARO:
 - a. Informs primary service worker and or supervisor at the time of the review or after consultation with ARU supervisor that ARO will create a red flag warning in RICHIST.
 - b. Sends primary service worker a red flag e-mail with the issue(s) of concern requesting a red flag warning be created in RICHIST.